

Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation
Water Resources Division
Water Rights Bureau

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT
For Routine Actions with Limited Environmental Impact

Note: Instructions to DNRC staff for preparing this EA can be found at:
http://www.dnrc.state.mt.us/eis_ea.html

Part I. Proposed Action Description

1. *Applicant/Contact name and address:* Benjamin A. Stanley
PO Box 6696
Bozeman, MT. 59771
2. *Type of action:* Application For Beneficial Water Use Permit # 30024833-41H
3. *Water source name:* Unnamed tributary to South Fork Ross Creek
4. *Location affected by project:* Section 29 T1N R5E, Gallatin County
5. *Narrative summary of the proposed project, purpose, action to be taken, and benefits:*
The applicant proposes to divert 53.3 GPM up to 86 acre feet, from January 1 to December 31, from this unnamed tributary to South Fork Ross Creek for fishery purposes. The place of use is a 7.1 acre foot reservoir located in the S2 N2 NE Sec 29 T1n R5E, Gallatin County. The DNRC shall issue a Provisional Permit if the applicant proves the criteria in #85-2-311 are met.
6. *Agencies consulted during preparation of the Environmental Assessment:*
(include agencies with overlapping jurisdiction) Montana State Historic Preservation Office, Montana Natural Heritage Program, Gallatin County Planning Office, Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife & Parks, Montana Department of Environmental Quality.

Part II. Environmental Review

1. Environmental Impact Checklist:

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

WATER QUANTITY, QUALITY AND DISTRIBUTION

Water quantity - Assess whether the source of supply is identified as a chronically or periodically dewatered stream by DFWP. Assess whether the proposed use will worsen the already dewatered condition.

Determination: The source of water is an unnamed tributary to the South Fork Ross Creek, which has not been listed as chronically or periodically dewatered by the MDFWP.

Water quality - *Assess whether the stream is listed as water quality impaired or threatened by DEQ, and whether the proposed project will affect water quality.*

Determination: Unnamed tributary to South Fork Ross Creek is not listed on the DEQ, 303(d) list.

Groundwater - *Assess if the proposed project impacts ground water quality or supply. If this is a groundwater appropriation, assess if it could impact adjacent surface water flows.*

Determination: This applications proposed use of surface water will have no impact on groundwater.

DIVERSION WORKS - *Assess whether the means of diversion, construction and operation of the appropriation works of the proposed project will impact any of the following: channel impacts, flow modifications, barriers, riparian areas, dams, well construction.*

Determination: The water will be diverted through a pipeline into the fish pond, and returned via a pipeline to the creek.

UNIQUE, ENDANGERED, FRAGILE OR LIMITED ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES

Endangered and threatened species - *Assess whether the proposed project will impact any threatened or endangered fish, wildlife, plants or aquatic species or any "species of special concern," or create a barrier to the migration or movement of fish or wildlife. For groundwater, assess whether the proposed project, including impacts on adjacent surface flows, would impact any threatened or endangered species or "species of special concern."*

Determination: The Montana Natural Heritage Program was contacted. They found no records of species of special concern.

Wetlands - *Consult and assess whether the apparent wetland is a functional wetland (according to COE definitions), and whether the wetland resource would be impacted.*

Determination: This change will not affect existing wetlands that exist in the area.

Ponds - *For ponds, consult and assess whether existing wildlife, waterfowl, or fisheries resources would be impacted.*

Determination: The new pond may provide additional habitat for wildlife & waterfowl.

GEOLOGY/SOIL QUALITY, STABILITY AND MOISTURE - *Assess whether there will be degradation of soil quality, alteration of soil stability, or moisture content. Assess whether the soils are heavy in salts that could cause saline seep.*

Determination: There should be no significant impact on soil quality or stability. There is no evidence of saline seep near the project location.

VEGETATION COVER, QUANTITY AND QUALITY/NOXIOUS WEEDS - *Assess impacts to existing vegetative cover. Assess whether the proposed project would result in the establishment or spread of noxious weeds.*

Determination: Existing vegetative cover will not be changed.

AIR QUALITY - *Assess whether there will be a deterioration of air quality or adverse effects on vegetation due to increased air pollutants.*

Determination: There should be no impact on air quality relating to this permit.

HISTORICAL AND ARCHEOLOGICAL SITES - *Assess whether there will be degradation of unique archeological or historical sites in the vicinity of the proposed project.*

Determination: The Montana State Historic Preservation office was contacted. They believe there is a low likelihood that cultural resources will be impacted. They feel that a cultural resource inventory is unwarranted at this time.

DEMANDS ON ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES OF LAND, WATER, AND ENERGY - *Assess any other impacts on environmental resources of land, water and energy not already addressed.*

Determination: No additional impacts on other environmental resources were identified.

HUMAN ENVIRONMENT

LOCALLY ADOPTED ENVIRONMENTAL PLANS AND GOALS - *Assess whether the proposed project is inconsistent with any locally adopted environmental plans and goals.*

Determination: The Gallatin County Planning Board has no restrictions against constructing new fish ponds.

ACCESS TO AND QUALITY OF RECREATIONAL AND WILDERNESS ACTIVITIES - *Assess whether the proposed project will impact access to or the quality of recreational and wilderness activities.*

Determination: This project is located on private land, with no access to recreational or wilderness activities. No impact is expected.

HUMAN HEALTH - *Assess whether the proposed project impacts on human health.*

Determination: No impact on human health is expected.

PRIVATE PROPERTY - Assess whether there are any government regulatory impacts on private property rights.

Yes___ No___ If yes, analyze any alternatives considered that could reduce, minimize, or eliminate the regulation of private property rights.

Determination: Private property rights are not impacted by this proposed action.

OTHER HUMAN ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES - For routine actions of limited environmental impact, the following may be addressed in a checklist fashion.

Impacts on:

- (a) Cultural uniqueness and diversity? No impact
- (b) Local and state tax base and tax revenues? No impact
- (c) Existing land uses? No impact
- (d) Quantity and distribution of employment? No impact
- (e) Distribution and density of population and housing? No impact
- (f) Demands for government services? No impact
- (g) Industrial and commercial activity? No impact
- (k) Utilities? No impact
- (i) Transportation? No impact
- (j) Safety? No impact
- (k) Other appropriate social and economic circumstances? No impact

11. *Secondary and cumulative impacts on the physical environment and human population:*

Secondary Impacts No impact to the human population, or physical environment have been identified..

Cumulative Impacts No cumulative impacts to the physical environment, or human population have been identified.

3. *Describe any mitigation/stipulation measures:* No mitigation measures are planned at this time.

4. *Description and analysis of reasonable alternatives to the proposed action, including the no action alternative, if an alternative is reasonably available and prudent to*

consider: The applicants could fill their pond with well water from a well pumping less than 35GPM and 120 acre-feet.

PART III. Conclusion

1. Preferred Alternative The applicants would prefer that we approve this permit.

2 Comments and Responses No comments received to date.

1. Finding:

Yes___ No_**X**___ Based on the significance criteria evaluated in this EA, is an EIS required?

If an EIS is not required, explain why the EA is the appropriate level of analysis for this proposed action: Significant impacts have not been identified. The EA is the appropriate level of action for this project.

Name of person(s) responsible for preparation of EA:

Name: Jan R Mack

Title: Water resources Specialist

Date: March 7,

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